

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name Kose Hall

Other names/site number Clarke Fork Trading Company/Belfry Country Store/24CB1813

2. Location

street & number 216 Broadway Avenue

☐ not for publication

city of town Belfry

☒ vicinity

State Montana

code MT

county Carbon

code 09

zip code 59008

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Signature of certifying official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

 entered in the National Register

 determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain:)

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | private |

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
		structures
		Objects
1	1	buildings
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE = restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE = department Store

SOCIAL/meeting hall

RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility =

Dance Hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/Trade = department store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Western Commercial

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE/Sandstone

walls: STONE/Sandstone

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Constructed in 1907, Kose Hall is located on Broadway Avenue in Belfry, Montana near the confluence of Bear Creek and the the Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River. The grocery store is located a short distance east of the National Register of Historic Places-listed Montana, Wyoming & Southern Railroad Depot (24CB1148). The grocery store building consists of a two-story stone Western Commercial style building with a one story addition on the west. The building is oriented north and south and faces north onto Broadway Avenue, Belfry's historic commercial district. The rectangular-plan building is covered by a shed roof with stepped parapet walls. The fenestration of the building is intact as are most of its original structural and decorative features. Its sandstone foundation is common to commercial and residential buildings built in this area during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The setting is largely unchanged as it is surrounded by commercial and residential buildings constructed during the first two decades of the twentieth century, well within the Period of Significance of the depot. Other than the placement of mobile homes in the lots adjacent to the building on the east, there have been no substantial changes to the setting of the historic property.

Narrative Description

Belfry, Montana is situated in the broad upper Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River valley of south central Montana. The community is located in a transition zone between Fort Union Formation and alluvial deposits laid down by the river over the course of millenia. Belfry is located on Silvertip Flat at the confluence of the river and Bear Creek, which flows from its headwaters west of the community. The area bordering the river and creek is riparian with other vegetation, including large mature cottonwood trees that date to the time Belfry was established in 1906. The Beartooth Range is visible to the west and southwest, while the Pryor Mountains are visible to the southeast. The areas north, east, and south of Belfry are utilized for agricultural purposes, primarily sugar beet cultivation. Cattle grazing occurs in the badlands west of town.

Kose Grocery Store Building (one contributing structure)

The Kose Grocery Store building is a two story, masonry stone vernacular Western Commercial style building with a one story masonry sandstone addition attached on the west. The building displays a rectangular footprint and faces north onto Broadway Avenue in Belfry's commercial district. The building rests on a sandstone foundation and has a shed roof sheathed in asphalt. The two story section was constructed in 1907 and the one story section in 1910. Both sections were constructed by Clause Kose with sandstone quarried from the same source.² The walls of the two story section have stepped parapets with embedded, partially exposed, brick chimneys on the east and west elevations. The façade has a projecting sandstone cornice and belt course. There are two partially in-filled windows on the second story façade. Both have small 1/1 double-hung windows. There are four window openings on the ground floor façade; each is infilled with tongue-in-groove siding. The siding rests atop a low fieldstone wall with concrete coping and three vertical concrete posts. The east and west elevations of the section have two window openings near the southern end of the elevations. Each have small 1/1 double-hung windows. The rear or north façade of the section contains two window openings on the second floor. Both are partially in-filled with 1/1 double-hung windows. A central entry occurs between the previously described windows and is reached by a recently constructed exterior wood staircase and landing. The entry has an in-filled transom and a wood door with a barred storm addition. The landing is supported by wood posts that appear to be extended through the vestibule directly below it. The vestibule is larger than what appears on the 1912 and 1927 Sanborn maps. The vestibule shelters a cold storage unit and partially obscures the rear façade. An in-filled window is located adjacent to the vestibule to the west.

Clause Kose constructed the one story addition in 1910. It has a shed roof sheathed in asphalt and the walls are constructed of sandstone. The front (north) façade is comprised of concrete blocks. The entry, located on the east side of the façade, has a wood door with a full-length fixed lite. A transom above the door is in-filled. Two fixed plate glass

¹ David Alt and Donald W. Hyndman, *Roadside Geology of Montana*, (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1991), 235.

² The source of the sandstone has not been identified, but the surrounding bluffs and hills exhibit outcrops of the material.

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display windows are located west of the door. A decorative translucent purple and clear glass block clerestory spans the façade above the entry and display windows. No windows or openings occur on the west elevation. The rear (south)

elevation contains an entry with a wood door central to the façade. The entry is in-filled with vertical board siding as is the transom. Flanking windows are also in-filled, the west unit by an interior/exterior cooler unit.

A full-width open-air porch covers the ground-floor front façade of the building. It has a shed roof supported by square wood posts and was constructed in the 1970s.

Storage Building (one non-contributing structure)

A storage building is located directly behind, south of the grocery store. Constructed in 1998, it is oriented north and south and faces west. It has a shed roof, composition walls and entries on the west façade and south elevation, and rests on a wood pier foundation.

Integrity

The Kose Grocery Store Building retains good integrity. The building retains its historic footprint, fenestration, its historic appearance, and decorative details. The porch, constructed in the 1970s, spans the length of the entire front façade contrasting with the 1912 and 1927 Sanborn maps which indicate an open-air porch covering only the two-story section of the building. Windows openings on the front and rear façades of the two story section have been partially in-filled with plywood, leaving small windows on the second floor. The modifications occurred between 1991 and 1993. The original window openings, however, are intact. It is not known what the ground floor of the two story section looked like in 1907. When the addition was constructed in 1910, the ground floor façade was modified, removing the entry and replacing it with display windows across the façade. The existing tongue-in-groove in-fill likely occurred in the 1980s. The rear vestibule was expanded sometime after 1927 and the rear porch and stairs reconstructed after 2002. The storage building behind the grocery was constructed in 1998.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1907-1963

Significant Dates

1907, 1910

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Clause H. Kose/Builder

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance begins in 1907 when C. H. Kose constructed the building in the new community of Belfry and ends in 1963, the National Register's 50-year requirement. The building still functions as a grocery store.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Kose Hall is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The building is associated with the initial period of development of Belfry between 1906 and 1912 when it was one of several businesses constructed on the community's main street (Broadway Avenue) after the arrival of the Montana, Wyoming & Southern Railroad in January 1906. The building initially functioned as a restaurant and dance hall, an important gathering place for the first Belfryites. By 1908 it functioned as a general store, a role it has largely served for over a century. The building was one of several in Belfry constructed of native sandstone and is one of only two stone buildings remaining in Belfry (the Belfry Bank is the other). It is a good example of a simple Western Commercial style building and retains decorative elements including a projecting cornice and belt course along with a colored glass block clerestory. Modifications to the exterior in the 1980s and 1990s altered the appearance of the building somewhat, but the modifications appear to be reversible and the original window openings are very much evident and intact. Kose Hall is, therefore eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion C.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

Kose Hall can be listed in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the socio-economic development of the railroad community of Belfry. Built in 1907, Kose Hall initially served as a dance hall and restaurant, a place where Belfry's citizens gathered to socialize. It also functioned as a meeting hall for local organizations and a venue for Sunday religions services. In 1908, it became an important general mercantile, a function it served until the 1920s. From the 1930s, it has functioned as a general store and is the last remaining such business still open in Belfry. Today, as in years past, it serves as a community meeting place.

The building can also be listed on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an excellent example of a simple Western Commercial style building located on Belfry's once thriving main street. Constructed of sandstone quarried in the nearby hills, Kose Hall retains a distinctive appearance that sets it apart from the remaining commercial buildings in Belfry. It exhibits decorative detailing on the façade of the two story portion of the property, including projecting sandstone cornice and belt course, as well as the embedded brick chimneys and the sandstone pattern on the east elevation. The one story addition, built in 1910, is much simpler in appearance, but displays a concrete block façade that was likely obtained from one of the county cement plants and a splendid colored glass block clerestory. Although plywood has partially in-filled the windows and the display windows on the east half of the building have also been infilled, the original openings are intact and the modifications are reversible.

Kose Hall remains a unique representative of a time of tremendous economic growth in south central Montana because of the opening of the Bear Creek District coal fields and the arrival of the Montana, Wyoming and Southern Railroad. It has functioned as a general store, grocery, and community gathering place for its entire history. Kose Hall is worthy of listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River Valley is part of the aboriginal territory of the Apsaalooke (Crow) Indians. Arapooish, an Apsaalooke chief described Crow Country as "a good country because the Great Spirit had put it in exactly the right place." The Mountain Crow division of the Apsaalooke came to live in northern Wyoming and southeastern Montana over 500 years ago, or possibly earlier. The Mountain Crow ranged as far east as the Powder River and as far west as the Yellowstone River and depended on the availability of game and edible plants. The 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty designated Crow Territory to encompass all lands south of the Musselshell River between the headwaters of the Yellowstone River to the west, the headwaters of the Powder River to the east and the main ridge of the Wind River Mountains in Wyoming as its south boundary. After the discovery of gold in southwestern Montana in the early 1860s, continuous pressures by non-Indians resulted in several reductions to the original Crow Indian Reservation boundaries. The second Fort Laramie Treaty in 1868 reduced Crow Territory by removing all lands in Wyoming and north of the Yellowstone River and making the eastern boundary the divide between the Big Horn and Rosebud rivers, restricting the Crow to approximately eight million acres. An 1880 agreement ratified in 1882 eliminated all Crow lands west of the Boulder River. In this same agreement, the Crow ceded a wide strip of land that extended from the Boulder to the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone encompassing the Clark's Fork River valley. The 1882 agreement allowed for the development of

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coal deposits located within the ceded strip. Pressure placed on the Crow Indians by mining, railroad and cattle interests resulted in Congress removing the area east of the Boulder River to the present Crow Indian Reservation's western boundary in 1893.³

James "Yankee Jim" George discovered extensive coal deposits on Bear Creek west of Belfry in 1866. Its remoteness, lack of a market for the product, and its location within the Crow Reservation, delayed its exploitation for over two decades. In 1887, a cartel of Bozeman and Helena businessmen formed the Rocky Fork Coal Company to mine the fossil fuel at the site of a tiny stage stop settlement on the Meteteetsee Trail called Red Lodge. By late 1887, the company's owners made an arrangement with the Northern Pacific Railway (NPRR) to construct a branch line from Laurel, Montana 44 miles south to Red Lodge and the coal mines. Completed in April 1889, the Rocky Fork & Cooke City Railway sparked an expansion of coal mining in the region, especially after the line was acquired by the NPRR the following year. The boom was further augmented in 1892 when the Crow Tribe ceded the region from its reservation, thereby opening up the territory to agricultural development. Much of the coal mined at Red Lodge was utilized by the NPRR. Over the hill in the Bear Creek drainage, development of the coal reserves was hampered by its inaccessibility and the lack of a good transportation system. Small-time miners, however, established a number of wagon mines in the district to sell coal for domestic purposes in Red Lodge.⁴

The Yellowstone Park Railroad and Coal Mining

With the removal of the Clark's Fork and Bear Creek valleys from the Crow Reservation in 1893, it opened up thousands of acres for non-Indian settlement and exploitation, especially the coal lands near the head of Bear Creek. In 1895, Philip Gallaher and Elijah Smith opened a commercial mine in the Bear Creek District. Extensive development of the mine, however, was hampered by the lack of a good transportation system to bring in heavy equipment and ship coal out. The men, along with Billings entrepreneurs Christian and Peter Yegen, attempted to lure the Northern Pacific Railway into the district from its terminus at Bridger. They proved unsuccessful and began looking elsewhere for funding to construct a short line railroad into the coal district. The potential for profits garnered the interest of Frank A. Hall, a railroad promoter and civil engineer from Livingston. Born in Wisconsin in 1866, he arrived in Montana sometime in the early 1890s. In 1898, he was able to finance the construction of the Yellowstone Park Railroad between Brisbin and Trail Creek in Park County. The NPRR purchased the shortline soon after its completion. Shortly thereafter, Hall attempted to construct a telephone line between Livingston and Bozeman, but was thwarted by the Bell Telephone Company. Although not a completely ethical businessman, Hall proved to be just the person the Bear Creek mining company owners were looking for.⁵

While Hall's questionable business ethics discouraged Montana area investors and the NPRR, his reputation did not precede him on the east coast. In late 1904, he was able to generate interest of some small-time Pennsylvania investors in the construction of a shortline railroad from the NPRR's Bridger, Montana terminus south through the Clark's Fork valley to Cooke City. At the Clark's Fork Canyon, the proposed company planned to construct a smelter to process ores extracted from the New World Mining District northeast of Cooke City. The plan, as envisioned by Hall, would also include the construction of a spur line up Bear Creek from its confluence with the Clark's Fork into the coal mining country at the head of the creek. In January 1905, Hall, along with a group of investors headed by Lancaster, Pennsylvania lawyer George R. Heisey and physician Oran M. Belfry visited Clark's Fork and Bear Creek valleys, touring the Elijah Smith's

³ Little Big Horn College, "Apsaalooke Writing Tribal Histories Project," obtained at <http://lib.lbhc.cc.mt.us/history>; Charles J. Kappler, ed. and comp. *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties 2 vols.*, 2 (Washington, DC, 1904), 594-596. Crow treaties and agreements are available at <http://www.digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/>. For a discussion of reductions to the Crow Reservation, see William M. Brooke, "A Contest over Land: Nineteenth Century Crow-White Relations," *Montana Vistas: Selected Historical Essays* ed. Robert Swartout, Jr., (Washington, DC, 1981), 1-24 and Burton M. Smith, "Politics and the Crow Indian Land Cessions, 1851-1904," *Montana, The Magazine of Western History* 36 (Autumn 1986), 24-37; Michael P. Malone, Richard B. Roeder and William L. Lang, *Montana: A History of Two Centuries*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 122-123.

⁴ Jon Axline, Cultural Resource Inventory and Evaluation: Bearcreek – East & West [S-RS 308-1(1)8], Montana Department of Highways, 1991, 4-5; Shirley Zupan and Harry J. Owens, *Red Lodge: Saga of a Western Area*, (Red Lodge: Carbon County Historical Society, 1979), 9-10, 20, 22, 38-39, 47-49; Albert L. Babcock, *An Illustrated History of the Yellowstone Valley*, (Spokane: Western Historical Publishing, 1907), 234-235; Jon Axline, "Something of a Nuisance Value: the Montana, Wyoming & Southern Railroad, 1905 – 1953," *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, 40:4, (Winter 1999), 51; *Red Lodge Picket*, February 1907.

⁵ Axline, "Something of a Nuisance Value," 51, 52; Donald B. Robertson, *Encyclopedia of Western Railroad History, Volume 2* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing, 1991), 346; U. S. Census Records, 1900-1930; Thomas T. Taber, "Shortlines of the Treasure State: The Histories of the Independently Operated Shortlines of Montana," unpublished manuscript, 1960, p. 2.

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Montana Coal & Iron Company mine and Christian and Peter Yegen's Bear Creek Coal Mining Company properties. Upon the conclusion of their Montana visit, Heisey and Belfry deposited enough money in the Carbon County Bank in Red Lodge to conduct a survey for the new railroad and pay for right-of-way acquisition. The men's agents in Montana, Bear Creek Coal Company treasurer Bert Vaill and real estate speculator James F. Rich began acquiring right-of-way soon thereafter.⁶

With the necessary right-of-way in hand, Heisey, Belfry, and Hall incorporated the Yellowstone Park Railroad (YPRR) in Augusta, Maine in May 1905. Initially, corporate headquarters were located in Lancaster, Pennsylvania with local operations centered at Bridger. The company issued \$3 million in bonds for construction of the line and acquisition of locomotives and rolling stock. The money invested in the project, however, was not enough to see its plans through to Cooke City. Therefore, the YPRR drastically cut back its plans and built only from Bridger to the Bear Creek coal fields. Grading of the railroad bed began in June 1905 and was completed by December of that year. Laying of steel began in January 1906 by Japanese work crews employed by E. W. Logan and Joe Hunt of Gebo, Montana. On 4 July 1906, the tracks and first locomotives reached the new town of Belfry to much fanfare. Already in place were the railroad's roundhouse (24CB1146), a water tank, and a depot. Hall and his associates relocated the YPRR's company headquarters to the new Belfry depot, a substantial building that also housed a waiting room, baggage and freight room, and living quarters for the company's president, Frank Hall.⁷

Well ahead of the grading crews, Hall, Vaill and Rich purchased 40 acres of irrigated farmland on Silvertip Flat from John Woodcock at the strategic junction of the Clark's Fork River and Bear Creek in July 1905. They formed the Belfry Townsite Company a week later. The company began selling lots to railroad employees in early 1906. They named the town for company founder Dr. Oran M. Belfry.⁸

The YPRR suffered a contentious relationship with the coal companies and the NPRR throughout its history. The YPRR extended its tracks up Bear Creek into the coal fields in 1906 with branches to all five mining companies active in the district. All of the companies granted free right-of-way to the YPRR on the condition that they received breaks in the cost of hauling coal from their mines to the terminus at Bridger. The railroad, though, was plagued by problems of its own making, namely the poor construction of the line itself. Instead of placing ballast on the grade to drain off water and add some stability to the trackage, the contractors, because of financial constraints, laid much of the trackage directly onto the grade. What ballast did exist consisted of coal slack that became highly unstable when wet. During spring thaws or rainy weather, the tracks would often "squish" out under the weight of the locomotives and rolling stock, causing frequent derailments. Financial limitations had also reduced the number of coal cars the railroad could purchase. The mining companies loaded coal onto YPRR cars, which ran them up to Bridger where they would be off-loaded onto NPRR coal cars for distribution throughout Montana and northern Wyoming. Unfortunately, the NPRR often did not cooperate with the YPRR, causing chronic car shortages at Bridger. The coal companies unfairly blamed the YPRR for the much of the problems, which caused frequent shutdowns at their mines. Threats of lawsuits against the YPRR were rampant. President Hall's own actions did nothing to alleviate the investors' worries about the railroad.⁹

By 1908, the YPRR was in dire financial straits. At an emergency stockholders' meeting in Augusta, Maine in May 1909, they reorganized the company, ousted Frank Hall, and formed the Montana, Wyoming & Southern Railroad (MW&SRR). Although the railroad's finances improved, it continued its rocky relationship with the Northern Pacific. During the boom years of World War I (1914-1918), the railroad saw its best profits, yet its complaints to the Montana Railroad Commission about the Northern Pacific's activities at Bridger did not abate. Profits, predictably, dropped during the 1920s, but the MW&SRR's importance to the prosperity of the coal mines did not. In addition to coal, the MW&SRR carried agricultural products and passengers. The railroad's fortunes continued to sag during the Great Depression, but picked up again during World War II when the demand for Bear Creek's high grade coal was high. But the Smith Mine Disaster in 1943, along with the conversion of railroad locomotives to diesel fuel and the increasing use of natural gas for domestic

⁶ Axline, "Something of a Nuisance Value," 53; Taber, "Shortlines," 2.

⁷ Axline, Ibid, 54-55; Taber, "Shortlines," 3-4.

⁸ Axline, "Something of a Nuisance Value," 55; Deed Book 11, Clerk and Records Office, Carbon County Courthouse, Red Lodge, Montana.

⁹ Evidence suggests that the Hall and the YPRR directors intended from the beginning to sell the line to the Northern Pacific Railway. That would explain the shortcuts taken on the construction of the railroad since none of the owners had any long-term interest in maintaining it. The Northern Pacific never did purchase the YPRR and the railroad was never substantially improved in light of that fact. Along with the Northern Pacific's reluctance to deal with the YPRR and the shoddy construction of the line, the railroad was chronically the target of complaints to the Montana Railroad Commission. Axline, "Something of a Nuisance Value," 55, 56ff; Taber, "Shortlines," 4-5.

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purposes spelled the end of the MW&SRR. The last coal mine in the district closed in the early 1950s and the railroad ceased operations in 1953; contractors pulled up the tracks in 1954. Today, there is little evidence the MW&SRR ever existed. Much of the 21-mile line has been obliterated by erosion and human activities; only traces of the old grade are still evident. The Bridger depot was converted into a residence in the 1970s, while the Bearcreek and Washoe depots were demolished in the 1950s or 1960s.¹⁰

Belfry

Belfry was the headquarters of the Yellowstone Park Railroad (YPRR) and later the Montana, Wyoming & Southern Railroad. The railroad complex consisted of a shop, coal tipple, water tank, and other ancillary structures. The community was strategically located at the confluence of the Clark's Fork River and Bear Creek. It was also surrounded by land used for agricultural and stockraising purposes. Although Belfry owes its existence to the railroad and coal, it was also a shipping center for cattle, sheep, and agricultural products raised in the Clark's Fork valley. The railroad was prominently represented in the community by its substantial depot that anchored the west end of the community's commercial district on Broadway Avenue. Even before the arrival of the railroad, considerable work had been done at the Belfry townsite. Shortly after the platting of the town, YPRR foreman J. F. Rich superintended the grading of streets on the townsite with railroad grading equipment. In anticipation of the arrival of the railroad, several people constructed commercial and residential buildings in Belfry during the second half of 1905. By December 1905, six months before the arrival of the tracks, several commercial buildings were under construction, including a post office. The settlement's two saloons had consolidated and W. A. Talmage constructed a plant for making cement blocks. In June, railroad president Frank Hall and business owners along Broadway Avenue hired contractor Gus Nash to build concrete sidewalks on both sides of the street from the depot to the public school. By the time the railroad arrived in Belfry in late June 1906, there was already a thriving commercial district along Broadway that included hotels, saloons, a lumber yard, and a grocery store. The Fourth of July celebration provided an introduction to the community for the region. The YPRR carried revelers to "the metropolis of the Clarke's [sic] Fork" from Billings and Bridger. Speeches by county notables, baseball games, a tug-of-war between local residents and the Japanese track-layers, a rodeo, vaudeville show, and other activities drew more than more than 1,500 people to Belfry. The *Carbon County Republican* reported that "considering the fact that Belfry did not exist a year ago, the enterprise she has exhibited in getting up such a monster celebration is marvelous, and if her citizens continue to exhibit the same point of hustle and bustle we predict that it will not be long when what is now a little village will be a thriving city of no mean proportion." While Belfry never became a "city of no mean proportion," it was an important trade and shipping center in the upper Clark's Fork Valley. By 1910, the community boasted a population of 179, with seventeen men employed by the railroad, mostly in the shop. Although most of Belfry's residents came from the Midwest, there were also a substantial number of Japanese emigrants employed as railroad section hands living in and near the community.¹¹

The 1912 Sanborn fire insurance map shows Belfry as an atypical railroad community. Instead of the "T" plan common for cities and towns along the routes of the Northern Pacific and Great Northern railroads in Montana, Belfry consisted of a single main street (Broadway Avenue) that lead directly east from the depot. Residential neighborhoods flanked the single commercial artery. The commercial district consisted of businesses dependent on the railroad, such as hotels and saloons, as well as enterprises geared to catering to farmers and ranchers in the surrounding area, such as lumberyards, grocers, mercantiles, a blacksmith shop, drug store, print shop, church, school, and bank. By 1912, Belfry's population rose to 200 individuals. Many of the businesses on Broadway were housed in masonry and concrete block buildings. During the 1920s, Belfry's population increased coincidentally with the boom in the coal industry in the nearby Bear Creek

¹⁰ Axline, "Something of a Nuisance Value," 58ff; Taber, "Shortlines," 5-7, 8-10.

¹¹ Nash also constructed many of Carbon County's reinforced concrete bridges in 1911. Carbon County Bridge Record. Clerk and Records Office, Carbon County Courthouse, Red Lodge, Montana; "Bridger," *Carbon County Gazette*, 7 September 1905; "Belfry," *Carbon County Gazette*, 5 January 1906; Kay Ewing, "History of Belfry as Written in 1938," in *Montana Free Press; The Journal of Rural Montana*, vol. 4, no. 1 (March 1993), 17; "Belfry to Celebrate Fourth," *Carbon County Republican*, 22 June 1906; "The Celebration at Belfry," *Carbon County Republican*, 6 July 1906; "Cement Walks for Belfry," *The Red Lodge Picket*, 21 June 1906; "Belfry's Rousing Fourth," *The Red Lodge Picket*, 5 July 1906; Jetta Regan, "The Story of the Belfry Community's Founding and Early Development to 1925," Unpublished manuscript, no date. Copy available at the Carbon County Historical Society [hereafter referred to as CCHS], Red Lodge, Montana; Author Unknown, "History of Belfry," Unpublished manuscript, no date. Copy available at the CCHS; *Montana Place Names from Alzada to Zortman*, (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 2009), 15; Roberta Carkeek Cheney, *Names on the Face of Montana: The Story of Montana's Place Names*, (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1990), 18; Zupan and Owens, *Red Lodge*, 267; Axline, "Something of a Nuisance Value," 55.

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mining district. By the early 1920s, the Occident Flour Company built a grain elevator along the MW&SRR tracks in the community. Three years later, in 1923, the Montana Utilities Company extended an electric power line to Belfry.¹²

While Belfry functioned as a shipping point for local agricultural goods, especially sugar beets, its fortunes were tied mostly to the coal mines ten miles west of town. The railroad made most of its money transporting coal to the NPRR terminus at Bridger and hauling equipment back to the mines. Passenger traffic was limited to a McKean Car, called the "Sub" or the "Gallop'n' Goose" by its riders. Belfry served as the headquarters of the railroad for its entire existence. The railroad was the primary employer in the community and its shop, coal tippie, and water tower dominated the north side of town. Other railroad-related structures included a grain elevator, warehouses, and storage buildings. The community's main street was dominated by three large hotels: the Carmont, Clark Fork Inn, and the Commercial. Belfry's connection to a railroad with chronic financial woes and less-than-adequate infrastructure may have prevented it from attaining a status more equal to other short line settlements, like Judith Gap and Clyde Park. Belfry suffered during the Great Depression of the 1930s and its fortunes sank because of the slowdown in coal production in the wake of World War II. When the MW&SRR ceased operations in 1953, Belfry became a quiet rural community that catered mostly to area ranchers and farmers.

Kose Hall

The 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows the stone grocery store building in its existing configuration. The east half of the building was two story and the west half, one story. An open-air wood-frame porch covered the two story section of the building and entry vestibule was located on the rear of it. By 1927, there had been no change to the footprint of the building, but its usage had changed: the one story section functioned as a dance hall, while the the ground floor of the two story section with sat vacant with a dwelling on the second story.¹³

John Woodcock homesteaded the future Belfry townsite, obtaining title to 160 acres in January 1902. He farmed the homestead until July 1905 when he sold 40 acres to the Yellowstone Park Railroad Company-backed Belfry Townsite Company. The townsite company sold Lot 8 to Clause H. Kose in April 1907. Born in Denmark in 1853, Kose emigrated to the United States in 1876 and was living in Iowa when he married Rebecca Heckthorn in 1893. By 1895 they relocated to Douglas, Wyoming, where he was a sheep rancher. Their only son, Edmund, was born in Wyoming in 1895. By 1900 the family was living near Wayne, Iowa, where Clause operated a farm. They moved to the Clark's Fork River valley in 1905. Clause listed his occupation in the 1910 census as a building carpenter, so it is likely he constructed this building in 1907 with sandstone obtained from the area's river bluffs and hills. The building was the first stone masonry building constructed in the fledgling town – and is the only one remaining in Belfry.¹⁴

It is unclear in what capacity the ground floor of the building originally functioned. Notices began appearing in the *Belfry News* in December 1907 about dances held in Kose Hall. In addition to frequent dances sponsored by a variety of different organizations, including the Belfry Bachelors Club, the building also hosted Sunday religious services and meetings of various groups. A notice appeared in the April 9, 1908 *Belfry News* that there "is a prospect that the commodious Kose Hall, which so admirably [is] adapted to public uses . . . will be transformed into lodgings by the proprietor." Kose decided against the renovation, but in September 1908 announced the opening of the Bon Ton Restaurant and Grocery in the building. Operated by his wife, Rebecca, the business not only catered dances in the building, but also provided a "complete stock of supplies needed by residents in town and country." The Koses continued to rent the second floor for dances and provided midnight meals to dancers. On one occasion, the Koses provided a package deal to a group of Belfry's young adults. In order to rent the dance hall, the partyers agreed to partake of a midnight supper at the Bon Ton Restaurant on the ground floor. When the appointed time rolled around, a few couples ate at the Bon Ton, while the majority went to the nearby Hotel Belfry for a meal. When they returned to the dance hall, Kose refused to admit them. A verbal altercation ensued which resulted in Kose throwing them all out of his building. It would appear that Rebecca Kose's meals were not as savory as those at the Hotel Belfry restaurant. The incident appears to

¹² Sanborn Fire Insurance Map: Belfry, Montana, 1912 at Montana Historical Society, Helena, Montana; United States Census Records: Belfry, Montana, 1920; Ewing, "History of Belfry," 18; Fay Duffield, "A Memologue of Belfry," in *Montana Free Press: The Journal of Rural Montana*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (March 1993), 30; Axline, "Something of a Nuisance Value," 55.

¹³ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1912, 1927 Correction. Viewed at www.sanborn.umi.com.

¹⁴ The 1912 Sanborn Map shows only this stone commercial building in Belfry. Deed Book 11, page 23; US Census Records, 1900, 1910; Deed Book 11: 423; *The Bridger Times*, 12 July 7 1923; Site Form: Kose Grocery (24CB1813). Form on file at the Montana Department of Transportation and Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena, Montana.

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have soured the Koses on operating the business and dance hall. They hosted a Christmas dance in the building in 1908 and then leased the building to a group of Carbon County entrepreneurs for use as a general store.¹⁵

On the last day of 1908, John Tolman, E. M. Clark, Frank Clark, and William A. Francis announced they had leased Kose Hall from Clause and Rebecca and planned to open an "up to date general store" in the building under the name the Clarke Fork Trading Company. Incorporated in Belfry in December 1908, the company's owners promised that the store would give Belfry "an up to date general store, guaranteed that it will be second to none in the valley." The store didn't open by the January 15, 1909 date promised by the owners because of a delay in the shipment of brackets for display shelves. The owners stated that business would be on a strictly cash basis, but if a customer couldn't afford to make purchases, he would be issued a coupon book that would function much like credit. The Clarke Fork Trading Company opened the first week in February 1909. In addition to the usual ballyhoo about its inventory and the coupon system, it also sponsored a dance and free meal on the second floor of Kose Hall. Music for the grand opening was provided by Heinie's Orchestra of Red Lodge. As soon as he turned sixteen, Clause and Rebecca's only son, Edmund, went to work for the Clarke Fork Trading Company.¹⁶

In June 1910, Clause Kose purchased the lot adjacent to his building from the townsite company and began construction of a one story addition to Kose Hall two months later. Kose likely obtained the sandstone from the same source as the 1907 structure. The *Carbon County News* reported that the new addition would be built of stone with two arches cut through the west wall of Kose Hall to permit access to the addition. The addition was incorporated into the Clarke Fork Valley Trading Company operation. In July 1919, Clause and Rebecca Kose deeded half interest in the ownership of the building to their son, Edmund, who had recently returned from serving in France during World War I. By 1920, Clause was operating a truck farm outside Belfry, while Edmund worked as a brakeman for the Montana, Wyoming & Southern Railroad. Tragedy struck the family in March 1922, when Edmund fell off the top of a coal car and was "severed in twain as a result of the wheels of a car passing over [him]." Clause died a little over a year later in July 1923, followed by Rebecca in 1924. Judge O. F. Goddard deeded ownership of the property to Rebecca's daughters from her first marriage, Edna Rissler and Hattie Green, in January 1926. Edna was the wife of Casper, Wyoming-area rancher George Rissler. Presumably, Edna leased the ground floor section of the building as a dance hall and the second floor served as living quarters.¹⁷

Edna Rissler sold the property to Charles and Pearl Burns in November 1935. Charles was an engineer for the Montana, Wyoming & Southern Railroad and a long-time resident of Belfry. Pearl operated the grocery store until 1940, when they sold the building and business to Paul and Margaret Curfman in September of that year. The Curfmans sold it to Russell Toogood in August 1947. Born in Michigan in 1906, Toogood's family moved to Montana in 1911 as part of the Homestead Boom. After homesteading north of Roundup, the family relocated to the Roberts area in the early 1930s. Russell Toogood moved to Belfry in 1938. After operating a trucking firm for a short time, he purchased Belfry Drug. After selling that business, he purchased the grocery store in Kose Hall. He ran the grocery store for nearly thirty years before selling it to Jon Brown in May 1976. The current owners, Robert and Maria Cichosz, purchased the building and business in April 1993.¹⁸

¹⁵ *The Belfry News*, 28 November 1907 – 8 May 1908; "Belfry Local Notes," *The Belfry News*, 9 April 1908; Advertisement, *The Carbon County News*, 3 September 1908; "Kose Hall is Scene of Threatened Tragedy," *The Carbon County News*, 5 November 1908; *Ibid*, 3 December – 24 December 1908.

¹⁶ The *Carbon County News* reported on 31 December 1908 that Clause Kose would remain in Belfry, but had not decided "what business he would follow." The 1910 census lists his occupation as a building carpenter. "Belfry Brief Notes," *The Carbon County News*, 31 December 1908; US Census Records, 1910; "New Store Will Be Ready January 15," *The Carbon County News*, 31 December 1908; *Progressive Men of the State of Montana*, (Chicago: A. W. Bowen & Co., 1902), 1273; Robert G. Raymer, *Montana, The Land and The People*, volume 2, (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1930), 266; "To The Public," *The Carbon County News*, 21 January 1909; Advertisement, *The Carbon County News*, 4 February 1909; "Belfry," *The Carbon County News*, 14 July 1910.

¹⁷ Rebecca Kose's obituary suggested that a broken heart contributed to her demise because of the recent deaths of her husband and son. "Rebecca Heckthorn Kose," *The Bridger Times*, 31 July 1924; Deed Book 19: 143; "New Store Building," *The Carbon County News*, 18 August 1910; Deed Book 29: 320; Jetta Regan, "Story of Belfry Community's Founding and Early Development to 1925," (Unpublished manuscript, 1925Z), 2; "Is Buried With Full Military Honors," *The Bridger Times*, 6 April 1922; Clause Henry Kose," *The Bridger Times*, 12 July 1923; US Census Records 1900-1920; Miscellaneous Real Estate Book 10: 445; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1927.

¹⁸ Deed Book 51: 35; US Census Records, 1910-1930; "Burns," *The Billings Gazette*, 5 January 1975; "Mrs. Pearl Burns," *The Billings Gazette*, 7 November 1969; Deed Book 56: 484; *Ibid* 64: 88; "Russell Edward Toogood," *The Carbon County News*, 3 June 1982; Deed Book 96: 63.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☒ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other
Name of repository: Carbon County Historical Society.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.0

(do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 12 656664 5000526
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

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The property is bounded on the north by Broadway Avenue and the south by the alley between Broadway and Vaill Avenue in Belfry. The Belfry Senior Center is located adjacent to the property on the west and by mobile homes on the east.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The property is located on lots 8 and 9 of Block 13, Belfry Original Townsite in the SE ¼ NE¼ NE¼ of Section 15, T8S, R22E.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jon Axline/Historian

organization _____ date July 24, 2012

street & number 448 Parriman Street telephone (406) 442-3959

city or town Helena state MT zip code 59602

e-mail jaxline@mt.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

(See Continuation Sheets)

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert E. and Marcia Cichosz

street & number P.O. Box 118 telephone 406-664-3310

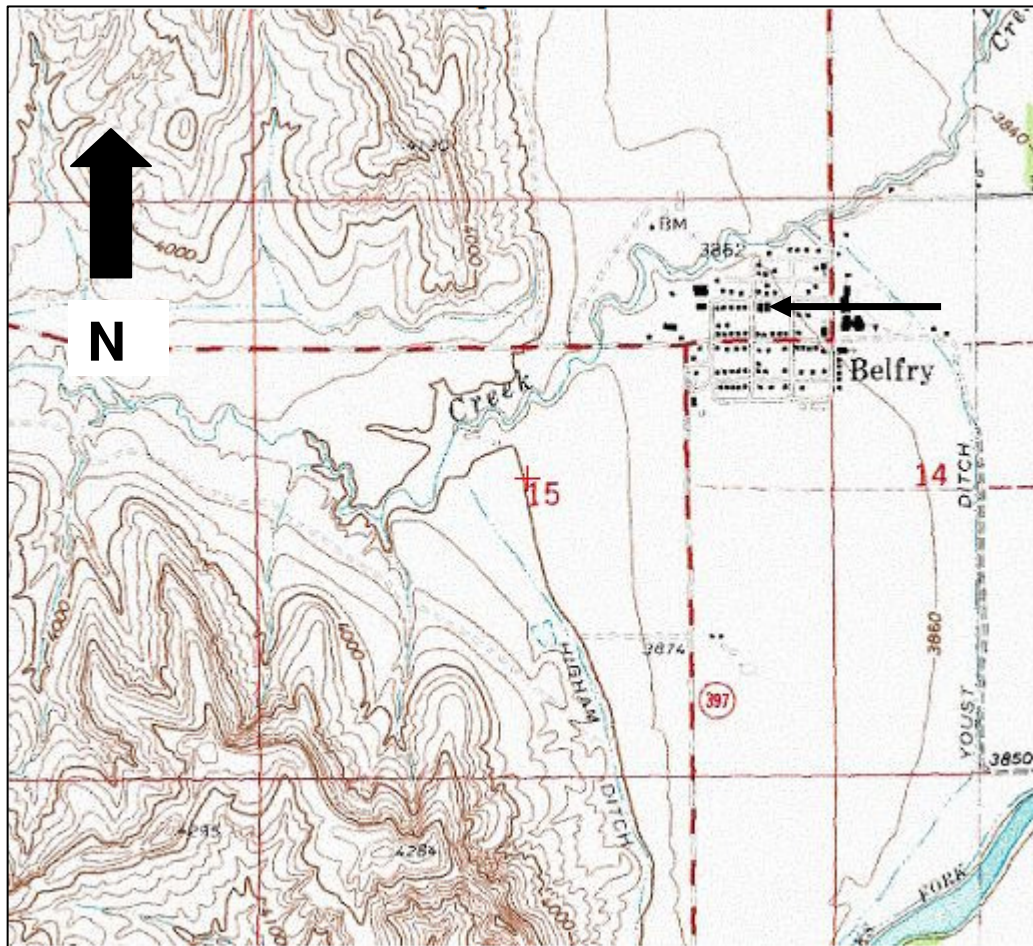
city or town Belfry state MT zip code 59008

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Location of Kose Hall. Found on the Belfry (1969) 7.5' Quadrangle map.

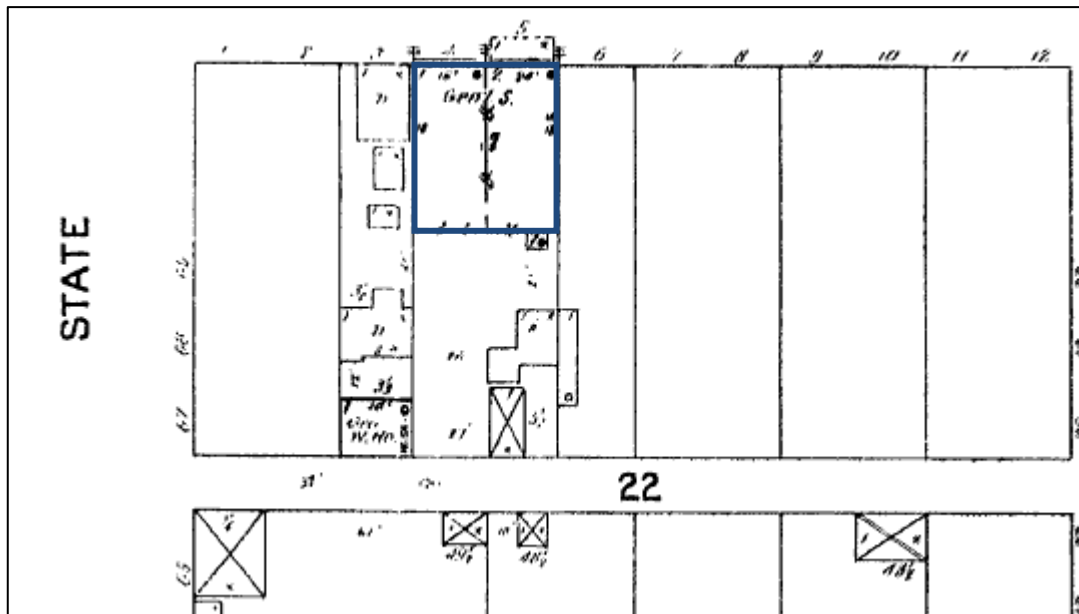
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Detail of 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Kose Hall

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Photograph Log

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Overview. North façade. View to the south.
Photograph: 0001
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0001

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Overview. North façade and east elevation. View to the southwest.
Photograph: 0002
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0002

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Detail of east elevation. View to the southwest.
Photograph: 0003
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0003

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Montana Department of Transportation. Helena, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Overview. South Facade. View to the north.
Photograph: 0004
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0004

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Overview. South façade. View to the northeast.
Photograph: 0005
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0005

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Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Detail of entry. South facade. View to the northeast.
Photograph: 0006
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0006

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Detail of west elevation. View to the northeast.
Photograph: 0007
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0007

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: North facade. View to the southeast.
Photograph: 0008
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0008

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Detail of Entry. View to the south.
Photograph: 0009
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0009

Name: Kose Hall (24CB1813)
County and State: Carbon County, Montana
Photographer: Jon Axline
Date of Photograph: July 2012
Location of original negative: Carbon County Historical Society. Red Lodge, Montana.
Description and view of camera: Detail of colored glass block clerestory. North façade. View to the south.
Photograph: 0010
MT_CarbonCounty_KoseHall_0010

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Photo 0001. Overview of north façade. View to south.

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Photo 0002. Overview of north façade and east elevation. View to the southeast.

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Photo 0003. Detail of east elevation. View to the southwest.

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Photo 0004. Overview of south façade. View to the north.

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Photo 0005. Overview of south façade. View to the northeast

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Photo 0006. Detail of entry. South façade. View to the northeast.

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Photo 0007. Detail of west elevation. View to the northeast.

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Photo 0008. North façade and west elevation. View to the southeast.

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Photo 0009. Detail of entry. View to the south.

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Photo 0010. Detail of Colored Block Clerestory of Kose Hall. North façade. View to the south.